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FDA nod for Novartis eyecare firm's glaucoma drug

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Singapore: Alcon, the global leader in eye care and a division of Novartis, has recieved US FDA approval for Simbrinza suspension, indicated for the reduction of elevated intraocular pressure (IOP) in patients with primary open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension.

Elevated IOP is the only modifiable risk factor for glaucoma. Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that lead to progressive damage of the optic nerve and can result in gradual, irreversible loss of vision, and eventually blindness, if left untreated. Glaucoma affects more than 2.2 million Americans and is the second-leading cause of preventable blindness worldwide.

"Alcon is the global leader in providing both pharmaceutical and surgical options for patients living with glaucoma," said Mr Robert Warner, area president, US and Canada, Alcon.

"The introduction of Simbrinza further expands our ability to provide effective treatments for patients with elevated IOP. Given its excellent efficacy, established safety profile, and the fact that it is the only available, fixed-dose combination without a beta blocker approved in the US, Simbrinza has the potential to re-shape the treatment paradigm for glaucoma," said Mr Warner.

"Simbrinza represents an important new option for treating glaucoma patients with elevated IOP," said Dr Gregory Katz, Glaucoma Service, St. Joseph Mercy Medical Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan, US. "Glaucoma must be treated over the course of one's life, and elevated eye pressure must be managed every day. It's exciting to now have a product available that combines two effective compounds into one multi-dose combination, offering sustained control."